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# Environmental Crisis, Narcissism and the Work of Grief

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## Abstract

This paper explores the relationship between environmental crisis, narcissism and the work of grief. In the first section, we provide an overview of the way narcissism has re-emerged in recent scholarship within cultural geography and environmental psychology. Developing and in part challenging the normative focus on selfish, self-destructive consumption that we identify as a major strand in the literature we draw out themes of daunting loss. In the second section these themes and processes are explicitly framed in terms of grief and connected to recent conceptualisations of the 'Anthropocene'. We argue that narcissistic responses can be usefully reframed in terms of a variety of grief responses. Hence, we address the work of grief as multifaceted and multi-directional; encompassing bewilderment, denial but also creative re-imaginings provoked by the experience of loss. This point is further developed in the third section using an example from an advocate of 're-wilding'.

## Introduction

Recent years have witnessed the re-emergence of the concept of 'narcissism' to explain and explore 'late modern subjectivities' and societies.<sup>1</sup> In this essay, we adopt and interrogate the idea of narcissism as a means to unravel the psycho-social nature of environmental crises and bring it into conversation with the theme of grief. Drawing on recent interventions in geography that emphasise the disordered and self-deluding nature of responses to environmental change,<sup>2</sup> we argue that a 'self-obsessed' sense of individual material entitlement can be usefully analysed by understanding how it combines with and connects to grief. In contrast to accounts that offer a normative model, in which selfish behaviours are found wanting against an implied standard of non-pathological and politically progressive responses, this paper draws out the way narcissistic narratives can also reflect an on-going emotional negotiation with environmental crises that are experienced as upsetting, daunting and, perhaps, overwhelming. Thus, for example, what Bodnar identifies as the 'dissociative materialism' seen in young people becoming 'wasted' on alcohol and other drugs to escape daily stresses, including reminders of environmental degradation, can, we suggest, be analysed in terms of a complex and multifaceted model of the work of grief.<sup>3</sup>

By addressing narcissism through the concept of grief, this essay aims to contribute to the increasingly well-established idea of a disjuncture between individualising psycho-social mechanisms and global environmental challenges. By positing that the gap or space between these scales has come to be filled, at least in part, with grief-stricken psychological forms we offer a melancholy portrait of contemporary cultures of excess and narcissistic entitlement.<sup>4</sup> This argument does two other things: first, it suggests that the growth in recognition of the 'Anthropocene'<sup>5</sup> has been accompanied by a dissatisfied and regretful set of attitudes and behaviours, articulated both through and against a wider culture of consumerism. Second, it helps to draw together, and make sense of, the co-existence of an apparent indifference to the planet's future and regret for a 'dying planet' exhibited across contemporary societies.<sup>6</sup>

In the first section, we provide an overview of the way narcissism has re-emerged in critical scholarship. Developing and in part challenging the normative focus on selfish, self-destructive consumption, we draw out themes of daunting loss. In the second section, these themes and processes are explicitly framed in terms of grief and connected to recent conceptualisations of the 'Anthropocene'.<sup>7</sup> Drawing on Randall, we argue that narcissistic responses can be usefully reframed in terms of a variety of grief responses.<sup>8</sup> Thus, rather than adopting the conventional model of 'grief work' as a therapeutic 'psychosocial transition'<sup>9</sup> with distinct stages, we apply a more open and less prescriptive notion of *the work of grief* as multifaceted and multi-directional; encompassing bewilderment, denial but also creative re-imaginings provoked by the experience of loss.<sup>10</sup> Our focus on grief also draws on the creative, adaptive qualities associated with melancholia. 'While mourning abandons lost objects by laying their histories to rest', explain Eng and Kazanjian, 'melancholia's continued and open relation to the past finally allows us to gain new perspectives on and new understanding of lost objects'.<sup>11</sup> This point is further developed in the third section using an example of re-wilding literature. Here, creative opportunities and paradoxes of nostalgia for the environment are explored in the company of George Monbiot's personal declaration for re-wilding, *Feral: Searching for Enchantment on the Frontiers of Rewilding*.<sup>12</sup>

### **'To live for the moment': Narcissistic Entitlement and Environmental Crisis**

I lay awake ... and masturbate because ... why not just have an orgasm if the whole world is falling apart (patient quote, Bodnar).<sup>13</sup>

Evidence suggests that whilst awareness or knowledge about environmental issues has gained momentum (for instance, Johnson and Roper, on changes in awareness between 1990 and 2011 in the United States<sup>14</sup>) so too have cultures of narcissism. Twenge and Campbell have identified a rise in narcissistic self-obsession, arguing that we now live in an era of 'narcissistic entitlement'.

Many ... today are simply oblivious to others' needs or ... think that others' needs are just not as important as their own .... This state of mind is ... entitlement: the pervasive belief that one deserves special treatment, success, and more material things.<sup>15</sup>

This perspective suggests that for '[m]any ... today' the earth and its resources, hold no purpose beyond servicing the self.<sup>16</sup> Although their evidence is drawn largely from the United States, Twenge and Campbell claim that a 'narcissism epidemic' has been unleashed across the world spread by 'the relentless rise of ... [an] emphasis on material wealth, physical appearance, celebrity worship, and attention seeking'.<sup>17</sup>

Within psychology and psychoanalysis, narcissism is generally understood to be an unhealthy, sometimes pathological, obsession with the self. The term is derived from the myth of Narcissus who, according to Greek mythology, falls in love with his own reflection, which he cannot embrace, so sits in self-admiration until he dies.<sup>18</sup> For Freud, narcissism is the investment of libidinal energy in the ego.<sup>19</sup> Lacan observed that narcissism starts in the mirror phase – when, in early childhood an individual first identifies (a separation of) the self.<sup>20</sup> For the narcissist, the image of the self promises an impossible perfection; its pursuit becomes an obsessive and unending goal. More recently, narcissism has moved beyond the domain of psychiatric disorders and clinical narratives. To many commentators the figure of Narcissus offers a reflection of modern times. Benjamin suggests that, in 'recent cultural criticism',

Narcissus has replaced Oedipus as the myth of our time. Narcissism is now seen to be at the root of everything from the ill-fated romance with violent revolution to the enthralled mass consumption of state-of-the-art products and the 'lifestyles of the rich and famous'.<sup>21</sup>

Amongst others, Benjamin has in mind the influential social diagnoses of Christopher Lasch, who offered narcissism as 'a Metaphor of the [contemporary] Human Condition' in his *The Culture of Narcissism*:

To live for the moment is the prevailing passion - to live for yourself, not for your predecessors or posterity. We are fast losing the sense of historical continuity, the sense of belonging to a succession of generations originating in the past and stretching into the future.<sup>22</sup>

Lasch linked narcissism to permissive cultures and forms of capitalism that encourage self-gratification and individual license. Drawing on Lasch, Mendelson and Papacharissi argue that narcissistic behaviour typifies post-modern forms of individualisation, in which the disclosure of character is taken 'to its logical extreme, thus affording identity play and performative [excesses]'.<sup>23</sup> More recently, the rise of narcissistic tendencies, once associated with Western consumer capitalism, has been reported elsewhere, including among the growing middle class in China.<sup>24</sup> This apparent geographical spread has been linked to the emergence of consumer capitalism as an inter-connected planetary as well as local condition, along with the rise of social media use and online technologies (Twenge notes, however, that causal connections to new technologies are not clear<sup>25</sup>).

However, while the power and appeal of the narcissist metaphor is clear, work in this psycho-social tradition is often so saturated with normative and prescriptive ideas and images that the complex and vulnerable nature of the 'narcissistic individual' becomes difficult to see or understand. It is important to note here the stigmatising quality of the term 'narcissist'. As Tyler writes,

[N]arcissism acquired its meaning and force as a critical term through its stigmatizing attribution to individuals and groups associated with the rise of identity politics ... the meaning of narcissism is intertwined with a history of negative attribution. Claims of cultural narcissism remain largely uncontested, and the contentious cultural and political history of narcissism is rarely acknowledged within contemporary theoretical accounts of 'cultural narcissism' and 'media narcissism'.<sup>26</sup>

This stigmatising quality is to the fore in a range of portraits of the self-destructive, emotionally dead and self-deluded nature of contemporary consumers. Studies emerging mostly from the United States include research by psychoanalytic therapists such as Bodnar,

who finds a 'galaxy of emptiness' amongst her youthful cohort who, she asserts, are 'unbound by the constraints of the natural world ... [and] speak ... [in ways that] symbolize self-constructions derived from environments of wealth and excess'.<sup>27</sup> Using clinical case studies of young, professional adults, Bodnar identifies a generational loss of, '[a] relationship to the natural world that limited the human capacity for excess', a relationship that used to be force 'humanity into creative solutions of mind and soul – literature, philosophy, science, music, and art' and 'manage the complexities of living'.<sup>28</sup>

Central to Bodnar's thesis is the loss of contact with and openness to nature amongst younger generations and a related withdrawal, or hard-shelling, of the self. Drawing on Anzieu's concept of *le moi-peau*, Bodnar identifies the emergence of a protective psychological 'skin' around the body and the ego 'wrapping the self's psychic integrity in a metaphoric membrane that processes the contact between self and other, the individual and the environment'.<sup>29</sup> This means that, 'parts of the self can act independently of each other ... [and] large portions of experiences can be split off from any particular moment of awareness'.<sup>30</sup> This leads, it is argued, towards narcissistic 'acting out'; excessive behaviours that help young people to avoid or to forget the natural world and environmental crises.<sup>31</sup> In a similar vein, Healy cites Salecl to describe those ('a great many'), for whom,

the gulf between promised freedom and ultimate limitations of enjoyment creates unbearable anxiety. Subjects respond with ... new levels of 'toxic mania and excess – alcohol, drugs, shopping, workaholism'.<sup>32</sup>

The puritan discourse that structures such accounts produces a focus on the intoxicated and decadent 'modern subject'. Healy claims that 'peak oil is the end of a bender and climate change is our collective hangover'.<sup>33</sup> The 'collective' Healy refers to here appears to be western rather than global, a geographical focus that may help to explain his rather scolding tone towards what he presents as the indolent refusal to admit to our 'addictive' disorder and unmask the 'fantasy' world not merely of consumer excess but of ameliorative environmental actions (such as the quest for sustainable cities and carbon markets). These, 'palliative fantasies' promise an 'easy fix', writes Healy, to addictions that, as with drug

dependence or uncontrollable gambling, have become entwined with avoidance behaviours, particularly of accountability.<sup>34</sup>

Healy calls for the use of 'shock' to dispel the 'hypnotic qualities' of the consumer society of 'total enjoyment' and jolt sufferers 'into a new relationship with language and a new level of responsibility for their own desires'.<sup>35</sup> But rather than a panacea, this suggestion is meant as an intervention designed to drive home the message that choice requires conscious self-control and a preparedness for 'responsibility'. Yet, if the traits of narcissistic entitlement do exist and already carry the burden of grief, then trying to shock or alarm people into self-awareness, appears misguided.<sup>36</sup> There is a high level of awareness about environmental crises that are unfolding but the capacity to meaningfully respond appears to be lacking, particularly in the context of consumer capitalism and its associated demands in the everyday<sup>37</sup>. This is a complex phenomenon that cannot usefully be reduced to the indifference of a feckless generation. It is surely not merely cheeky to point out, parenthetically, that by transferring the problem to the heedless and ill-informed, the scholars cited here overlook the possibility that, airmile-for-airmile, many academics engage in far more environmentally reckless activities than poorer and less mobile groups.<sup>38</sup> Rather than 'othering' the problem, it might be more appropriate and productive to see it as a shared dilemma.

### ***Daunted by Crises***

Evidence suggests that regardless of the overall increase in conscious public effort to conserve 'the environment'<sup>39</sup> the task of, for instance, reversing climate change is widely viewed as simply too daunting or psychologically distressing.<sup>40</sup> Action to mitigate environmental degradation has been patchy and slow regardless of widespread awareness that much of what humans do, day to day, is detrimental to ecological systems and natural habitats.<sup>41</sup> Feelings of complicity and inadequacy in the face of these challenges are hard to acknowledge or negotiate, regardless of awareness, availability of detailed information and education on the issues at stake. While writing a book review of Weintrobe's *Engaging with Climate Change: Psychoanalytic and Interdisciplinary Perspectives*,<sup>42</sup> the enormity of the impacts of the Anthropocene suddenly struck the reviewer, Helga Skogstad:



In an emotional sense, it is not easy reading. I experienced in myself just those feelings described in the book: the difficulty of facing the destruction that has been done, the guilt of not doing enough and the conflict of not wanting to give up a comfortable life style that is detrimental and causes suffering to human beings and species elsewhere in the world.<sup>43</sup>

The surround-sound of eco-catastrophe is amplified by the extreme responses of some, such as those who have fled 'off-grid'<sup>44</sup> as well as the ubiquitous death-knells for landscapes, coastlines, habitats and species. Indeed, the *New York Times* has a webpage devoted to the latter with an ongoing real-time, timeline of extinctions.<sup>45</sup> Moser suggests that, the 'drumbeat of news about various overwhelming environmental and societal problems' numbs individual reactions, resulting in what appears to be apathy.<sup>46</sup> However, the daily avalanche of news that represents not merely bad news but seemingly insurmountable calamity, appears to provoke a variety of psychological responses. The simple analysis of heedless, selfish reactions, identified above, may also be elaborated as forms of emotional transference and, more specifically, practices of avoidance and psychological 'splitting'.<sup>47</sup> These are not reactions of indifference but also of recognition and, as we explain later, of grief. The process of transference in the face of environmental crises is now well-documented. For example, Stoll-Kleemann et al. have noted that,

a number of socio-psychological denial mechanisms ... [have] heightened the [perceived] costs of shifting away from comfortable lifestyles, set blame on the inaction of others, including governments, and emphasise[d] ... doubts regarding the immediacy of personal action.<sup>48</sup>

The shifting of both blame and action has often gone hand-in-hand with a willingness to find in the complex nature of the causes of climate change, and mixed evidence more generally, an 'escape clause' that allows if not 'climate change denial' per se, denial of the need for personal investment in this (uncertain) cause.<sup>49</sup> Such denial, indifference, and defensiveness can become normalised. An Australian poll from 2011 suggests that:

Support for taking tough action to address climate change continues to erode. The foreign policy goal of tackling climate change is considered 'very important' by only 46% of Australians, down seven percentage points from [2010] and down 29 points from 2007... Americans were less likely than Australians to support the most aggressive form of action.<sup>50</sup>

Hanson (above) has identified a tendency for environmental concerns to fluctuate,<sup>51</sup> while other research maintains that the decline in interest and belief in 'the science' is generational.

GenMe [grew up in the 1990s is]... less likely than [Baby] Boomers [born after WWII] or GenXers [born in the 1960s and 1970s] to take action to help the environment and save energy ... many [young adults see] ... no reason to help others ... the vast majority (96%) [are] uninterested in civic and political affairs.<sup>52</sup>

Such evidence needs to be treated cautiously. It exists alongside an overall rise of green awareness and practices.<sup>53</sup> The work of denial and transference appears to be taking place simultaneously with an acknowledgment that the environment matters. We have already implied that this kind of reaction – a turning away from something, not because it does not matter but because it is daunting and overwhelming - bares the hallmarks of grief. The point is brought into sharper focus by Randall, who draws our attention to the way the challenges of environmental crises have resulted in the co-presentation of 'two parallel [or split] narratives':

... one [is] about the problems of climate change and the other about the solutions. In narratives about the problem of climate change, loss features dramatically and terrifyingly but is located in the future or in places remote from Western audiences. In narratives about solutions, loss is completely excised.<sup>54</sup>

This 'defensive process of splitting and projection' Randall argues, 'protects the public from the need to truly face and mourn the losses associated with climate change'.<sup>55</sup> This splitting is reflected in the contradictory dynamics of 'green consumerism' and 'sustainable'

consumption and housing.<sup>56</sup> Randall proposes that a model of grief, of the work that grief does and can do, may provide a useful way to frame both the production of 'splitting' and its diverse possible consequences, including the possibility of an eventual 'coming to terms' with crisis.

Drawing on Worden<sup>57</sup> to develop notions of the stages of grief-work and offer a more complex model of the 'work of grief', Randall conceived 'a series of tasks that can be embraced or refused, tackled, or abandoned' based on research with community-based, small group support networks.<sup>58</sup> These groups strive 'to achieve major, personal carbon reductions', and their success, she writes,

stems from their emphasis on the emotional significance of making deep changes: of the pain, loss, and grief that may be involved, of threats to identity and status, and of the importance of people coming to feel ownership and find[ing] their own way to the changes that we all need to make.<sup>59</sup>

The utility of thinking through grief will also come to the fore in our next section, which considers what may be described as the 'overwhelming' nature of the Anthropocene.

### **Overwhelmed by the Anthropocene: The Numbed Self and the Work of Grief**

Grief responses to large-scale loss are not new. For instance, since the late nineteenth century, the erasure and subordination of Indigenous peoples in settler societies included a romantic rhetoric and, often commercialised, aestheticisation of 'dying races'.<sup>60</sup> Although this nostalgic narrative offered both melancholic pleasure and political critique, its mournful content indicates that the object of concern was understood as dead; the presumed passing of Indigenous peoples was regretted but the prospect of their return was too slight to threaten the tranquillity of nostalgia. The work of grief associated with environmental crises is of a different order and shows almost no signs of being available for romantic recuperation. Rather, it offers an existential and practical challenge that is requiring the intellectual re-wiring of attitudes and even eras. One reflection of this process is the invention of the 'Anthropocene'. According to Steffen et al. 'The term Anthropocene

suggests: (i) that the Earth is now moving out of its current geological epoch, called the Holocene and (ii) that human activity is largely responsible for this exit from the Holocene, that is, that humankind has become a global geological force in its own right'.<sup>61</sup> The Anthropocene is an informal geological epoch, with debatable emergence identified as 'early (8000 BP), middle (1800 CE), or late (1950 CE)'.<sup>62</sup> It challenges the resilience and pre-eminence of 'nature' and renders the planet as vulnerable to human will and misuse. Although the Anthropocene label appears anthropocentric, it is also a category of self-critique. Thus, for example, for Head, the Anthropocene provokes questions about,

how can we articulate and enact the necessary creative human interventions – the creative destruction of dismantling the fossil-fuel economy, and a variety of restoration and repair activities? It may be out of the practice of these interventions that new concepts of the anthropos emerge.<sup>63</sup>

This critical theme is developed in other studies of the Anthropocene, many of which rely on behaviourist methodologies concerned with education (about human environmental impacts, and how to respond) or designed to change behaviour.<sup>64</sup>

The intimate and proximate nature of processes of environmental degradation adds to the psychological challenge of ongoing environmental crises. The problem is exacerbated by the complex way that 'nature' is so often still regarded as an outside good, an object to be acted on, or a mere resource. Kumar and Kumar note that,

[The] ecological identity of individuals ... is an amalgamation of multiple identities associated with culture, memory ... language ... [but] when the self's boundaries are experienced as fixed and firm, nature becomes a domain to pass through on the way to where one is going. It becomes a resource to be used (usurped), not a landscape of potential relations.<sup>65</sup>

This sense of detachment, accompanied with the overwhelming experience of environmental change, occasions a variety of grief-reactions. Collectively, we term this the work of grief. As noted earlier, this idea may be contrasted with the traditional and

influential model of 'grief work', which assumes distinct and discrete stages of grief. Indeed, in *Living in End Times*, Žižek (2010) posits that humanity has begun to grieve as global capitalism reaches its inevitable terminal crisis and proceeds to identify stages in the grieving process, with denial the first.<sup>66</sup> Žižek aligns the denial stage of grief with a neo-liberalised utopian form of escapism, which he finds in Hollywood films or Disneyfied<sup>67</sup> versions of more uncomfortable realities.

Žižek's cultural references return us to our identification of a relationship between the work of grief and narcissism. The point can be developed by revisiting some of the examples already provided by analysts of the psycho-social consequences of environmental crisis. First, we can return to the shifting of both blame and action, which we encountered in our discussion of both the 'daunting' nature of these crises and patterns of denial. The refusal to, and difficulty of, taking action and taking responsibility, illustrates both a paralysis in the face of loss and an unwillingness to change damaging and self-absorbed patterns of behaviour. Self-absorption itself can be read as a defensive mechanism, one that, in commodity cultures, often presents as 'retail therapy' and other forms of narcissistic 'self-work' designed to bolster a fragile and wounded sense of self. This serves as a reminder of Healy's contention that 'enjoyment creates unbearable anxiety' and of similar designations concerning 'toxic mania and excess'.<sup>68</sup> Randall offers a telling image of such 'manic activity', stating that 'it can take the form of intensifying destructive activity—rather like Jeremy Clarkson, the [former] UK TV motoring program presenter, who seems to defy both climate change and death with his style of driving'.<sup>69</sup> However, rather than finding in such responses merely symptoms of absent and nihilistic consumers (and, sometimes, youth), a 'crisis psychology' is revealed, in which seemingly insurmountable problems are recognised at the very moment, and through, patterns of self-destructive or seemingly indifferent behaviours.

The work of grief extends beyond the subjects of such studies to environmentalist activists and scholars themselves. Randall finds in the 'manic nature of some climate activists' work' a working through of grief.<sup>70</sup> When Bodnar mourns the demise of restraints on the 'human capacity for excess'<sup>71</sup> and Franz et al. depict the 'exploitativeness/entitlement' of the modern age,<sup>72</sup> they are engaged in acts of remembrance and grief. These critical responses offer forms of nostalgic grief that reflect the multi-faceted challenges facing humanity.

Closer scrutiny of the work of grief can, however, provide a clearer understanding about responses that evidence complex inter-plays between narcissism and nostalgia, avoidance and recognition.

### **The Paradoxes and Possibilities of Re-wilding: Self-fulfilment, Creativity and Loss**

The adaptive and creative aspects of the work of grief are a focus of interest for a number of recent studies of psychological responses to environmental change. Doherty and Clayton write of a 'range of adaptive responses' in which they include 'curiosity, concern, scepticism, or creativity; impulses toward conservation behaviours or competing impulses toward other prosocial interests or causes; and high adaptive ego defences – anticipation, humour, suppression'.<sup>73</sup> Randall pushes these possibilities further in order to argue for loss and grief to be honestly acknowledged, so that we can 'start telling the truth about loss'.<sup>74</sup> However, whilst useful in providing more sympathetic readings of how people cope with environmental crises, these exhortations fail to acknowledge the culture of self-concern, of narcissistic pleasures that are implicated as part of the challenges of environmental responsibility and irresponsibility.

Naderi and Strutton have examined the possibility of bringing narcissistic exhibitionism to work in *favour* of pro-environmental behaviour through consumption practices.<sup>75</sup> They note that while 'logic ... prescribes that [an] ... innate love of self and lowered regard for others should lead narcissistic consumers to choose non-green products',<sup>76</sup> a form of cultivatable 'green narcissism' can be enabled through targeted marketing, by associating status with green product choices. This process may also be seen in the increase in popularity of online auction sites of 'pre-loved' items, including 'retro chic' and 'recession wear', in which Bardhi and Arnould note an appeal to hedonic, individualised expressions of consumption and image-making.<sup>77</sup> However, working within consumption practices offers a narrow window into narcissism and also fails to recognise the work of grief carried and deferred within the narcissistic response. To engage the paradoxes and possibilities that a more joined-up perspective offers we look to the 'self-work' of re-wilding. Our example is George Monbiot's book, *Feral: Searching for Enchantment on the Frontiers of Rewilding*. It is the phrase

‘Searching for Enchantment’ that gives the first clue that this is as much about a personal mission of self-satisfaction as it is about a general call for pro-wilderness activism (cf. Foreman 2004<sup>78</sup>). Monbiot explains his mission in personal, self-centred, language, repeatedly referring back to his state of ‘boredom’ to explain his thirst for a more ‘alive’ relationship to nature. Alert to arguments that assert the ‘constructed’ nature of Nature, Monbiot dismisses grand claims about the authenticity of ‘wilderness’ but insists, nevertheless, on its potency and power in his personal story. He offers the following admission:

I was, I believed, ecologically bored. I do not romanticize evolutionary time. ... There was no state of grace, no golden age in which people lived in harmony with nature ... Nor was it authenticity I sought: I do not find that a useful or intelligible concept. Even if it exists, it is by definition impossible to reach through striving. I wanted only to satisfy my craving for a richer, rawer life than I had recently lived.<sup>79</sup>

This declaration of loss is framed in terms of self-discovery. Monbiot offers a synergy of narcissism and grief and does so in terms that are self-aware and self-critical. He knows he is not speaking for everyone; his sense of loss is personal and reflexive. After hearing from a farmer in Wales about his nostalgia for the lost human communities of the hills, Monbiot contrasts and connects their two different senses of loss:

Listening to him, I realized that both of us were harking back to something that is no longer there. His thoughts were filled by the days in which the hills bustled with human life. Mine were filled by the days in which they rustled with wildlife.<sup>80</sup>

The personal nature of Monbiot’s narrative allows him to offer his message both as a vision of the future and as a reflection of his own unique sense of anguish. He offers an alluring, intoxicating and beautiful dream. It is a dream of an escape from industrialised comfort, a flight from alienation but also a working through of the self-obsessed and rawly destructive nature of an alienated society. Monbiot’s ‘boredom’ with what he calls ‘living meekly’ deploys ‘wild nature’ as a psychological release but also a form of hope for a post-Anthropocene, a more ecologically balanced era in which new generations are no longer

afraid of nature. We see here how the work of grief is also the 'work of self', the two conjoining under the symbol of 'the wild' into a promise of catharsis, excitement and thrilling danger. With a swipe at less intrepid readers, Monbiot writes, 'if feeding the ducks is as close as you ever want to come to nature, this book is probably not for you'.<sup>81</sup> Monbiot approvingly cites the prophet of post-modern violence, J.G. Ballard, who he says 'reminded us that',

the suburbs dream of violence. Asleep in their drowsy villas, sheltered by benevolent shopping malls, they wait patiently for the nightmares that will wake them into a more passionate world.<sup>82</sup>

We do not offer *Feral* as a model (there is much to disagree with in Monbiot's thesis and approach) but present it here as a creative example of the inter-play of narcissism and grief in the context of environmental crisis. This example suggests that we should not look at denial, addiction and avoidance as exhausting the range of behaviours produced through this confluence of forces. As consumption trends shift with increasing rapidity, more flexible and less blanketly judgemental approaches will be increasingly appropriate. The pathways of narcissism and its relationship to themes of environmental loss are not predictable, nor are they all necessarily ecologically destructive.

## **Concluding remarks**

The economies of mass consumption that produced a world of abundance for many in the twentieth century face a different challenge in the twenty-first: to focus not on the indefinite accumulation of goods but instead on a better quality of life for all, with minimal environmental harm.<sup>83</sup>

Regardless of messages of environmental crises and admonishment, the cultures of consumerism appear ever more frenzied. This essay has considered the links between environmental disaffection and inaction, rising cultures of narcissism and daunting loss as some of the responses to the spectre of the Anthropocene. While we acknowledge that



cultures of consumption are, increasingly, not simply the domain of the west, the focus of this essay has relied on Anglophone reports and data that cannot simply be extrapolated to the rest of the world. Further and more internationally diverse, as well as transnational, work needs to be done in order to provide not only a more complex and complete picture but to locate sources of hope and potential in practises and responses from societies and communities that have different and, perhaps, more disruptive and dislocated, relationships to the moral economy of consumer capitalism. A number of studies that touch on the inter-play of themes of loss, grief and environmentalism in particular 'non-Western' societies already suggest that this is a fertile terrain for cross-cultural and comparative perspectives.<sup>84</sup>

Despite its geographical limitations, this essay has engaged with recent discussions about the emergence of the notion of 'narcissistic entitlement', as the culprit and scapegoat for environmental-societal ills, and sought to move beyond admonishment to a more open engagement with the complexities and multiplicity of responses to environmental crises. We have called, more specifically, for greater acknowledgement of and with the response of grief, which has led us to consider the need for a more nuanced sense of narcissism as a cultural form that reflects and even admits to a sense of overwhelming loss. In doing so, we have implied the need for new cultural geographies of environmental trauma, and new ways of engagement that acknowledge the inter-play of diverse responses and constraints.

Hamilton posits that climate change denial was, 'initially organized and promoted by fossil fuel interests [and] has developed into a political and cultural movement'.<sup>85</sup> Yet while deficits of information, misinformation and, at the same time, a confusing surplus of 'facts' are important, our argument here pushes us towards a broader appreciation of the intimate and paradoxical nature of inaction and alienation. We have argued that responses to eco-catastrophes, however they have been provoked or driven, are too complex to be reducible to simple and morally laden categories such as inertia or denial. We have also offered an argument for the acknowledgement of grief in the context of daunting loss; a phenomenon that often involves the psychological tactic of 'splitting', or compartmentalising knowledge and response capacities into distinct and un-relatable categories. However, in our conceptualisation of loss, we have sought to move beyond conventional models of 'grief

work', and its distinct linear stages, to argue for a more open and less prescriptive use of *the work of grief* as multifaceted and multi-directional.

One of these directions takes us towards the creative, adaptive qualities found in the narcissistic and nostalgic work of grief encountered in Monbiot's *Feral*. Monbiot articulates various forms of trauma and loss produced by the spectre of the Anthropocene. Here, loss is associated with loss of the non-human, of the raw and discordant presence of 'the wild'.

Monbiot's own personal loss and sense of grief appear to be self-concerned, circling around his 'boredom', yet it also offers a restless, post-materialist, dissatisfaction with other routes taken by the narcissistic self, pushing against both anthropocentrism and the satisfactions of consumer society. This is just one illustration of a creative route for the work of grief.

Randall provides another example by way of an account of an English couple who have decided to migrate in search of a more sustainable, ecological, existence. Reminiscing to Randall, they speak of the loss and sadness associated with leaving and their decision to never again travel by air. It is a decision that has meant an even wider divide between family and friends. But this loss is leavened with optimism, and a sense of new possibilities and bold choices about how to live in a more creative and more ecologically sustainable manner.

Contemporary human responses to environmental crises may be inseparable from the emotions of loss and grief, and this understanding may help cultural geographers, and others, as they engage this emerging field. Walton and Shaw (2015, 1) have called for more geographical engagement with psychological and psychoanalytical understandings of sadness and loss associated with the Anthropocene, 'from the individual to the highest levels of governance'. We have focused on grief not because we claim it to be the only or even the most significant crisis response but because attending to the work of grief can deepen and extend our understanding of the interconnected and complex ways people cope with the daunting challenges of the Anthropocene. Rather than admonishment and guilt tripping, we have offered a portrait that is alive to the paradoxes and dilemmas that we all must negotiate.

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- <sup>1</sup> J. M. Twenge and W. K. Campbell, *The Narcissism Epidemic* (New York: Free Press, 2009); I. Tyler, 'From 'The Me Decade' to 'The Me Millennium' The cultural history of narcissism', *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 10, 3, 2007, pp.343-363.
- <sup>2</sup> Examples include: S. Healy, 'Psychoanalysis and the Geography of the Anthropocene: Fantasy, Oil Addiction and the Politics of Global Warming', in P. Kingsbury and S. Pile, eds, *Psychoanalytic Geographies* (Farnham: Ashgate 2014), pp.181- 196; P. Robbins and S. Moore S, 'Ecological Anxiety Disorder: Diagnosing the Politics of the Anthropocene', *Cultural Geographies* 20, 1, 2013, pp.3-19.
- <sup>3</sup> S. Bodnar, 'Wasted and Bombed: Clinical Enactments of a Changing Relationship to the Earth', *The International Journal of Relational Perspectives*, 18, 2008, pp.484-512, p.484.
- <sup>4</sup> cf. Bodnar, 'Wasted and Bombed' and S. Žižek, *Living in The End Times* (London: Verso, 2010).
- <sup>5</sup> P. Crutzen, 'Geology of Mankind', *Nature* 415, 2002, p.23. Within the Anthropocene, the planet is 'defined by the actions of humans' (J. Zalasiewicz, M. Williams, A. Haywood and M. Ellis, 'The Anthropocene: A New Epoch of Geological Time?', *Philosophical Transactions of The Royal Society A*, 369, 2011, pp.835-841, p.835), where 'a single species has become an earth-changing force' (J. Lorimer, 'Multinatural Geographies for the Anthropocene', *Progress in Human Geography* 36, 5, 2012, pp.593–612, p.593). See Castree for cross-disciplinary engagement. M. Castree, 'The Anthropocene and the Environmental Humanities: Extending the Conversation'. *Environmental Humanities* 5, 2014, pp.233-260.
- <sup>6</sup> M. Levene, 'Climate Blues: or How Awareness of the Human End might re-instil Ethical Purpose to the Writing of History', *Environmental Humanities* 2, 2013, pp.153-173.
- <sup>7</sup> Robbins and Moore have noted a contradiction, or overplay, in the notion of the Anthropocene: 'how fully transformed the world is by our [human] presence *and* how indifferently the planet would recover from our absence. Are we too powerful a species, the Anthropocene author anxiously asks, or rather, irrelevant?'. Robbins and Moore, 'Ecological Anxiety Disorder', p.7.
- <sup>8</sup> M. Randal, 'Loss and Climate Change: The Cost of Parallel Narratives', *Ecopsychology*, 1, 3, 2009, pp.118-129.
- <sup>9</sup> C. Parkes and H. Prigerson, *Bereavement: Studies of Grief in Adult Life: Fourth Edition* (Hove: Routledge, 2010), p. 202.
- <sup>10</sup> See also A. Willox, 'Climate Change as the Work of Mourning', *Ethics and the Environment*, 17, 2, 2012, pp.137-164. Willox argues that 'constituting non-humans as mournable expands climate change discourse', p.137.
- <sup>11</sup> D. Eng and D. Kazanjian, 'Introduction: mourning remains', in D. Eng and D. Kazanjian, eds, *Loss*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), pp.1-25, p.4.
- <sup>12</sup> G. Monbiot, *Feral: Searching for Enchantment on the Frontiers of Rewilding*, (London: Allen Lane, 2013).
- <sup>13</sup> Bodnar, 'Wasted and Bombed', p.488.
- <sup>14</sup> S. C. Johnson and Roper GfK Consulting, *The Environment: Public Attitudes and Individual Behaviour – A Twenty-Year Evolution, 2011*, Online resource. Accessed 11 August 2014. [http://www.scjohnson.com/Libraries/Download\\_Documents/SCJ\\_and\\_GfK\\_Roper\\_Green\\_Gauge.sflb.ashx](http://www.scjohnson.com/Libraries/Download_Documents/SCJ_and_GfK_Roper_Green_Gauge.sflb.ashx).
- <sup>15</sup> Twenge and Campbell, *The Narcissism Epidemic*, p.230.

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- <sup>16</sup> M. Kumar M and P. Kumar, 'Valuation of the Ecosystem Services: A Psycho-cultural Perspective', *Ecological Economics* 64, 2008, pp.808-819.
- <sup>17</sup> Twenge and Campbell, *The Narcissism Epidemic*, pp.1-4.
- <sup>18</sup> 'There as he stooped to quench his thirst another thirst increased. While he is drinking he beholds himself reflected in the mirrored pool—and loves; loves an imagined body which contains no substance, for he deems the mirrored shade a thing of life to love. He cannot move, for so he marvels at himself, and lies with countenance unchanged, as if indeed a statue carved of Parian marble' (Ovid, *Metamorphoses*).
- <sup>19</sup> S. Freud, 'On Narcissism: An Introduction', *Standard Edition* 14, 1914, pp.73–102.
- <sup>20</sup> J. Lacan, 'The Mirror Stage', in P. du Gay, J. Evans and P. Redman, eds, *Identity: A Reader* (London: Sage, 2000), pp. 44-50.
- <sup>21</sup> J. Benjamin, 'The Oedipal Riddle', in P. Du Gay, J. Evans and P. Redman, eds, *The Identity Reader* (London: Sage, 2000), pp. 231–247, p.233.
- <sup>22</sup> C. Lasch, *The Culture of Narcissism: American Life in an Age of Diminishing Expectations*, (New York: Warner, 1979), p.5.
- <sup>23</sup> A. Mendelson and Z. Papacharissi, 'Look at Us: Collective Narcissism in Facebook Photos', in Z. Papacharissi, ed, *A Networked Self: Identity, Community, and Culture on Social Network Sites* (New York: Routledge, 2011), p.296.
- <sup>24</sup> See, for example, Cai and Sedikides, on the rise of narcissism in China. H. Cai and C. Sedikides, 'A Sociocultural Approach to Narcissism: The Case of Modern China', *European Journal of Personality*, 26, 5, 2012, pp.529–535.
- <sup>25</sup> J. Twenge, 'Does Online Social Media Lead to Social Connection or Social Disconnection?', *Journal of College and Character*, 14, 1, 2013, pp.11–20.
- <sup>26</sup> Tyler, 'From 'The Me Decade'', p.344.
- <sup>27</sup> Bodnar, 'Wasted and Bombed', p.502.
- <sup>28</sup> Bodnar, 'Wasted and Bombed', p.487.
- <sup>29</sup> D. Anzieu, *Le moi-peau* (Paris: Dunod, 1995); Bodnar, 'Wasted and Bombed', p.509.
- <sup>30</sup> Bodnar, 'Wasted and Bombed', p.509.
- <sup>31</sup> See also S. Weintrobe (ed), *Engaging with Climate Change: Psychoanalytic and Interdisciplinary Perspectives* (Hove, Routledge, 2013) and C. Franz, F. S. Mayer, C. Norton and M. Rock 'There is no "I" in Nature: The Influence of Self-awareness on Connectedness to Nature', *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 25, 4, 2005, pp.427–436.
- <sup>32</sup> Healy, 'Psychoanalysis and the Geography of the Anthropocene', p. 185; R. Salecl, *The Tyranny of Choice* (London: Profile Books, 2011).
- <sup>33</sup> Healy, 'Psychoanalysis and the Geography of the Anthropocene', p.187.
- <sup>34</sup> Healy, 'Psychoanalysis and the Geography of the Anthropocene', p.182.
- <sup>35</sup> Healy, 'Psychoanalysis and the Geography of the Anthropocene', p.183.
- <sup>36</sup> This is not to argue against the utility of provoking anxiety in clinical settings; see, for example, Y. Balwin, K. Malone and T. Svolos (eds), *Lacan and Addiction: An Anthology*, (London: Karnac, 2011).
- <sup>37</sup> Willox, Climate Change as the Work of Mourning'; T.R. Walton and W.S. Shaw, 2015, 'Living with the Anthropocene Blues', *Geoforum*, 60, pp. 1-3, for examples from remote Indigenous societies.
- <sup>38</sup> A. Bonnett, 'The Need for Sustainable Conferences', *Area* 38, 3, 2006, pp.229-230
- <sup>39</sup> Johnson and Roper, *The Environment*.

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- <sup>40</sup> S. Stoll-Kleemann, T. O'Riordan and C.C. Jaeger, 'The psychology of denial concerning climate mitigation measures: evidence from Swiss focus groups'. *Global Environmental Change* 11, 2000, pp.107-117, p.107. Albrecht et al. discuss the psychological distress associated with environmental change as a form of melancholia, or homesickness, which they term 'solastalgia'; a condition that, they note, can lead to psychological illness in individuals. G. Albrecht, G-A. Sartore, L. Conner, N. Higginbotham, S. Freeman, B. Kelly, H. Stain, A. Tonna and G. Pollard, 'Solastalgia: the distress caused by environmental change', *The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists*, 15 Supplement, 2007, S95-S98.
- <sup>41</sup> S.E. Eden, 'Individual environmental responsibility and its role in public environmentalism' *Environment and Planning A* 25, 12, 1993, pp.1743-1758.
- <sup>42</sup> Weintrobe, *Engaging with Climate Change*.
- <sup>43</sup> H. Skogstad, Book review (Engaging with climate change: psychoanalytic and interdisciplinary Perspectives), *Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy* 27, 2, 2013, pp. 191-195. DOI: 10.1080/02668734.2013.793918, p.191.
- <sup>44</sup> P. Vannini and J. Taggart, 'Voluntary simplicity, involuntary complexities, and the pull of remove: the radical ruralities of off-grid lifestyles', *Environment and Planning A* 45, 2, 2013, pp.295-311.
- <sup>45</sup> [http://topics.nytimes.com/top/news/science/topics/endangered\\_and\\_extinct\\_species/](http://topics.nytimes.com/top/news/science/topics/endangered_and_extinct_species/).
- <sup>46</sup> S. C. Moser, 'More Bad News: The Risk of Neglecting Emotional Responses to Climate Change Information', in S. C. Moser and L. Dilling, eds, *Creating a Climate for Change* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 64–80, p.67.
- <sup>47</sup> 'Splitting' is considered to be central to pathological narcissism; it is a 'black and white', or 'good and bad' view of the world, a defence mechanism that removes the self from the object, such as the environment, without reconciliation of the two. Cf. P. J. Watson and M. D. Biderman, 'Narcissistic Personality Inventory Factors, Splitting, and Self-Consciousness', *Journal of Personality Assessment*, 61,1, 1993, pp.41-57.
- <sup>48</sup> Stoll-Kleemann et al. 'The psychology of denial concerning climate mitigation measures'.
- <sup>49</sup> An example is a newspaper story titled 'Climate change measures like "primitive civilisations offering up sacrifices to appease the gods" says Maurice Newman' (by Latika Bourke, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 15 August 2014), in which the Australian Prime Minister's business advisor gives his views on climate change as 'global cooling'. Today, concerns about the environment have slipped down the political agenda in many countries. For discussion see T. Devinney, 'Why the Global Environmental Movement is Failing', 2012, accessed at: <http://www.modern-cynic.org/2012/06/20/why-the-global-environmental-movement-is-failing/>.
- <sup>50</sup> F. Hanson, *Australia and the World: Public Opinion and Foreign Policy*, The Lowy Institute Poll 2011, Lowy Institute for International Policy. p.7.
- <sup>51</sup> Hanson, *Australia and the World*.
- <sup>52</sup> Twenge, 'Does Online Social Media Lead to Social Connection or Social Disconnection?' pp.15-16.
- <sup>53</sup> Johnson and Roper, *The Environment*.
- <sup>54</sup> M. Randall, 'Loss and Climate Change: The Cost of Parallel Narratives', *Ecopsychology*, 1, 3, 2009, pp.118-129, p.118.
- <sup>55</sup> Randall 'Loss and Climate Change', p. 118.

- <sup>56</sup> K. Soper and F. Trentman (Eds), *Citizenship and Consumption; Consumption and Public Life* (UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008); K. Bickerstaff and G. Walker, 'The place(s) of matter: matter out of place—public understandings of air pollution', *Progress in Human Geography* 27, 1, 2003, pp.45–67; M. Sutcliffe, P. Hooper and R. Howell, 'Can eco-footprinting analysis be used successfully to encourage more sustainable behaviour at the household level?' *Sustainable Development* 16, 2008, pp.1-16.; J. Burgess, M. Limb and C.M. Harrison, 'Exploring environmental values through the medium of small groups: 1. Theory and practice'. *Environment and Planning A* 20, 3, 1998, pp.309–326; H. Priemus and E. Heuvelhof, 'The long way to sustainable areas', *Environment and Planning B: Planning and Design* 32, 2005, pp.1-3.; W.S. Shaw and L. Munday, 'Fibro Dreaming: Greenwashed beach-house development on Australia's coasts', *Urban Studies*. 50, 14, 2013, pp.2940–2958. Doi:10.1177/0042098013482507; C. Gibson, L. Head, N. Gill and G. Waitt, 'Climate change and household dynamics: beyond consumption, unbounding sustainability', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 36, 1, 2011, pp.3-8.
- <sup>57</sup> W. Worden, *Grief counselling and grief therapy* (London: Tavistock, 1983).
- <sup>58</sup> www.carbonconversations.org in Randall 'Loss and Climate Change'.
- <sup>59</sup> Randall 'Loss and Climate Change', p.121.
- <sup>60</sup> For example, Australian Aboriginal people were deemed to be 'doomed', from early days of settlement through to the middle of the Twentieth Century, see, for example, 'The Australian Aboriginal: A Dying Race', *The Cairns Post*, Thursday 29, 1946. See also R. McGregor, *Imagined Destinies: Aboriginal Australians and the Doomed Race Theory, 1880-1939* (Carlton: Melbourne University Press, 1997) and A. Moran, 'As Australia Decolonizes: Indigenized Settler Nationals and the Challenge of Settler/Indigenous Relations', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 25, 6, 2010, pp.1013-1042.
- <sup>61</sup> W. Steffen, J. Grinevald, P. Crutzen and J. McNeill J, 'The Anthropocene: conceptual and historical perspectives' *Phil. Trans. R. Soc. A*, 369, 2011, pp. 842-867 doi: 10.1098/rsta.2010.0327, p.843.
- <sup>62</sup> L. Head, 'Contingencies of the Anthropocene: Lessons from the 'Neolithic'' *The Anthropocene Review* 1, 2 2014, pp. 113-125, p.115.
- <sup>63</sup> Head, 'Contingencies of the Anthropocene: Lessons from the 'Neolithic'', p.122.
- <sup>64</sup> D. Lockton, D. Harrison and N. Stanton N, 'Making the user more efficient: design for sustainable behaviour', *International Journal of Sustainable Engineering* 1, 1, 2008, pp.3-8.
- <sup>65</sup> Kumar and Kumar, 'Valuation of the Ecosystem Services: A Psycho-cultural Perspective'.
- <sup>66</sup> Žižek, *Living in The End Times*
- <sup>67</sup> cf S. Zukin, *The Cultures of Cities*, (Boston: Blackwell, 1996).
- <sup>68</sup> Healy, 'Psychoanalysis and the Geography of the Anthropocene', p.185.
- <sup>69</sup> Randall 'Loss and Climate Change', p.123.
- <sup>70</sup> Randall 'Loss and Climate Change', p.123.
- <sup>71</sup> Bodnar, 'Wasted and Bombed', p.487.
- <sup>72</sup> Franz et al., 'There is no "I" in Nature' pp.433-434.
- <sup>73</sup> T.J. Doherty and S. Clayton, 'The psychological impacts of global climate change'. *American Psychologist*, 66, 4, May-Jun 2011, pp.265-276, p.272.
- <sup>74</sup> Randall 'Loss and Climate Change', p.125
- <sup>75</sup> I. Naderi and D. Stutton, 'I Support Sustainability But Only When Doing So Reflects Fabulously on Me: Can Green Narcissists Be Cultivated?' *Journal of Macromarketing*, 35, 1, 2015, pp.70-83. Other interesting examples of a creative response to a self-centred culture

come from the arts. Thus, for example, the French performance artist, ORLAN, uses her own body as a commentary on the current obsession with appearance, through the use of bizarre unconventional cosmetic surgeries. To charges that her art is purely narcissistic exhibitionism, she has stated that 'being a narcissist isn't easy when the question is not of loving your own image, but of recreating the self through deliberate acts of alienation ... [moreover] narcissism is important as long as one doesn't get lost in one's reflection' . Oran cited by S. Jeffries, 'Orlan's Art of Sex and Surgery', *The Guardian* 1 July, 2009. Accessed: <http://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2009/jul/01/orlan-performance-artist-carnal-art>. The photographer Cindy Sherman also relies on representations of the self to both reflect and destabilise narcissism. It is also pertinent to note that the use of researcher auto-ethnography relies on acknowledgement and utility of a little narcissistic reflection. For discussion see W. Shaw, 'Auto-ethnography and Autobiography in Geographical Research', *Geoforum*, vol. 46, 2013, pp.1-4.

<sup>76</sup> Naderi and Stutton, 'I Support Sustainability But Only When Doing So Reflects Fabulously on Me' p.3.

<sup>77</sup> F. Bardhi and E.J. Arnould, 'Thrift shopping: counting utilitarian thrift and hedonic treat benefits', *Journal of Consumer Behaviour* 4, 4, 2005, pp.223-233.

<sup>78</sup> Foreman's *Rewilding North America* devotes six chapters setting up 'The Bad News', where the harrowing realities of ecological crises and wounds, and extinctions, are set against the next section, 'The Good News', which entreats the reader to follow his 'call to action'. D. Foreman, *Rewilding North America: A Vision for Conservation in the 21st Century* (Washington: Island Press, 2004).

<sup>79</sup> Monbiot, *Feral*, p.7.

<sup>80</sup> Monbiot, *Feral*, p.174.

<sup>81</sup> Monbiot, *Feral*, p.11.

<sup>82</sup> Ballard cited by Monbiot, *Feral*, p.3.

<sup>83</sup> Worldwatch Institute, *The State of the World: Innovations that Nourish the Planet, A Worldwatch Institute Report on Progress Toward a Sustainable Society* (New York, London: W.W. Norton & Company, 2004), p.4.

<sup>84</sup> See, for example, A. Shah, *In the Shadows of the State: Indigenous Politics, Environmentalism, and Insurgency in Jharkhand, India*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010); L. Wright, 'Forest Spirits, Giant Insects and World Trees: The Nature Vision of Hayao Miyazaki', *Journal of Religion and Popular Culture*, 10, 1, 2005.

<http://www.usask.ca/relst/jrpc/art10-miyazaki.html>, no pages; B. Caminero-Santangelo, *Different Shades of Green: African Literature, Environmental Justice, and Political Ecology*, (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2014).

<sup>85</sup> C. Hamilton, 'What history can teach us about climate change denial', in Weintrobe, *Engaging with climate change*, pp.16-32, p.22; see also, R. Peet, P. Robbins and M. Watts (eds) *Global Political Ecology* (Oxon. :Routledge, 2011); P. Ashworth, T. Jeanneret, J. Gardner and H. Shaw, *Communication and Climate Change: What the Australian Public Thinks* (CSIRO, 2011).